


2016

Nest - caring for the caregiver

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nest

caring for the caregiver

Ashley Whitehead
MFA Thesis Project May 2016
VCUarts Interior Design

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Fine Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ashley Whitehead

B.S. Marketing Management
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2003

M.F.A. Interior Environments
Virginia Commonwealth University, 2016

To the teachers who inspired and guided me |
Chris Arias, Eleanor Barton, Jillian Chapin, Christiana Lafazani,
Rab McClure, Shari Perago, Sara Reed, Erin Richardson,
David Shields, Emily Smith, Rob Smith, Annie Thompson,
Roberto Ventura, and Camden Whitehead

To those who accompanied me on this journey |
Leah Embrey, Thomas Kennedy, Nilufar Makhamatova,
Merian O’Neil, Jessie Walton, Eline Warren, and Sarah Webb

To my family and friends who provided endless love and support
and

To all caregivers who give tirelessly of themselves.
May you find hope, strength and peace.



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I believe

in the simplicity of design.

Beautiful architecture is a result of a quiet simplicity. The power of the architecture lies in the simple elements it is made up of - lines, planes, voids and masses.

in the beauty of the process.

I have uncovered the wonder in the design process. There is growth to be found in everyday actions, in the repetitive motions.

in the healing power of design.

There is a link between our consciousness and the built environments that we occupy. How we experience these environments affects us mentally, physically, and emotionally. Therefore, as a designer, I have the ability (and responsibility) to design and affect the consciousness of all who occupy these environments

introduction

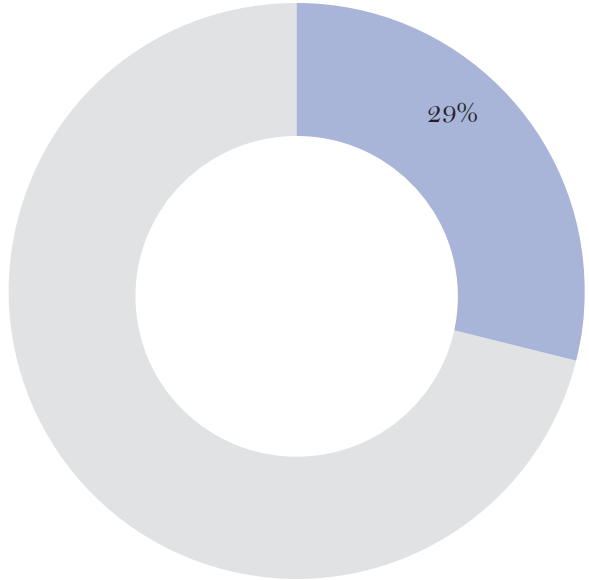
abstract

Today, more than ever, there exists an overlap between hospitality and healthcare industries; with the impact being felt in the way hospital interiors are designed. This influence impacts the patient’s experience but focuses very little on the experience of the caregiver. Caring for a sick child takes an emotional, mental, and physical toll on a family (Gulwadi, 2009). It is especially challenging to care for a sick family member when away from the comfort and security of the family’s private home. This project explores that challenge through the interior design of a space that, for both patient and family, is restorative, healing, and encouraging. It is a space that assists a family in caring for their loved one.

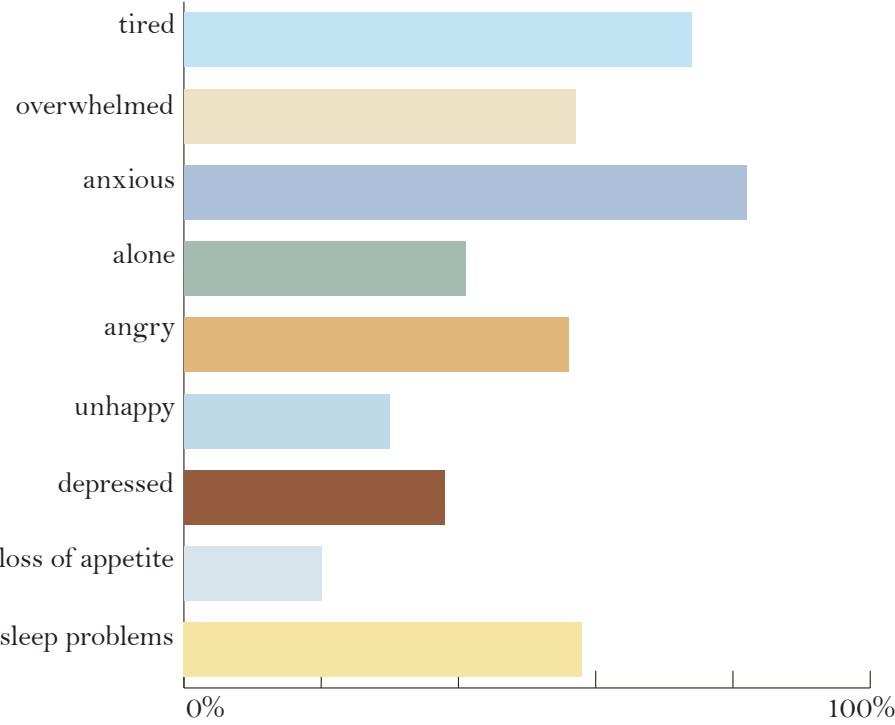
The VCU Medical System continues to expand. With this comes an even greater need to provide a place of healing for families to stay while their children/siblings are in long-term care. From 2010 to 2012 Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU increased its pediatric specialist by 20 percent. In 2010 VCU opened a new pediatric emergency room opened, the only one in Central Virginia to offer 24-hour access to all pediatric specialists (Children’s Hospital of Richmond, 2015). As of March 2016 the newly renovated 640,000 square foot Children’s Pavillion opened its doors.

Creating the optimal environment for emotional and mental healing has its challenges. A multi-prong approach is needed; one where psychology and design work together to create an optimal space of healing. Precedents such as the Ronald McDonald House of Richmond and British Columbia, support what is needed in terms of pyschological support. A literature review of healing spaces, the merging of healthcare and hospitality architecture and design, caregiving psychological and emotional needs, and facilities in urban environments, will establish what is needed in order to provide s space where caregivers are permitted to heal.

statistics



% of U.S. adult population providing care to someone who is ill, disabled or aged



symptoms of psychological distress + health consequences where the child is the primary care receiver

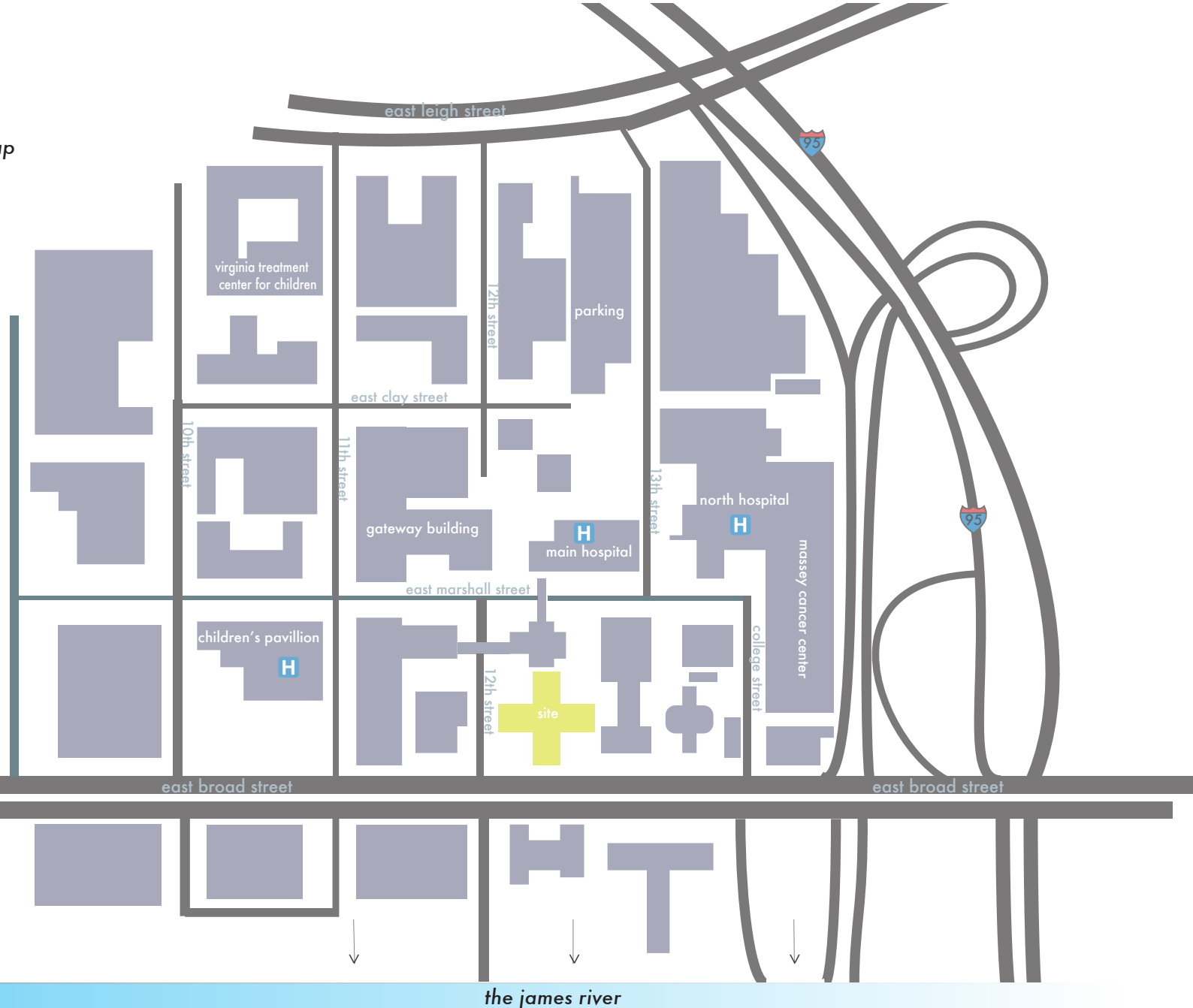
“architecture is bound to a certain situation. and i feel like the site is a metaphysical link,
a poetic link, to what a building can be.”

stephen holl

site

site

vicinity map



view of the MCV medical campus from Shockoe Bottom

The Medical College of Virginia has steep ties to the Richmond area. Founded in 1838 as the Medical Department of Hampden-Sydney College, 46 students enrolled in the first class lasting from November 5, 1838 – April 4, 1839. Students paid \$20 to the professors for each of the six courses (VCU Medical Center, 2015). Since then VCU / MCV has become a leading educational institution.

VCU has expanded its research programs significantly over the past decade and has over \$255 million in sponsored research (VCU Medical Center, 2015). The medical campus is situated on the edge of the downtown area and Shockoe Bottom. Downtown Richmond is host to government agencies, numerous businesses, including several Fortune 500 companies such as Dominion Resources, MeadWestvaco and Universal. There are a plentiful amount of restaurants, bars and nightclubs, in addition to housing for VCU

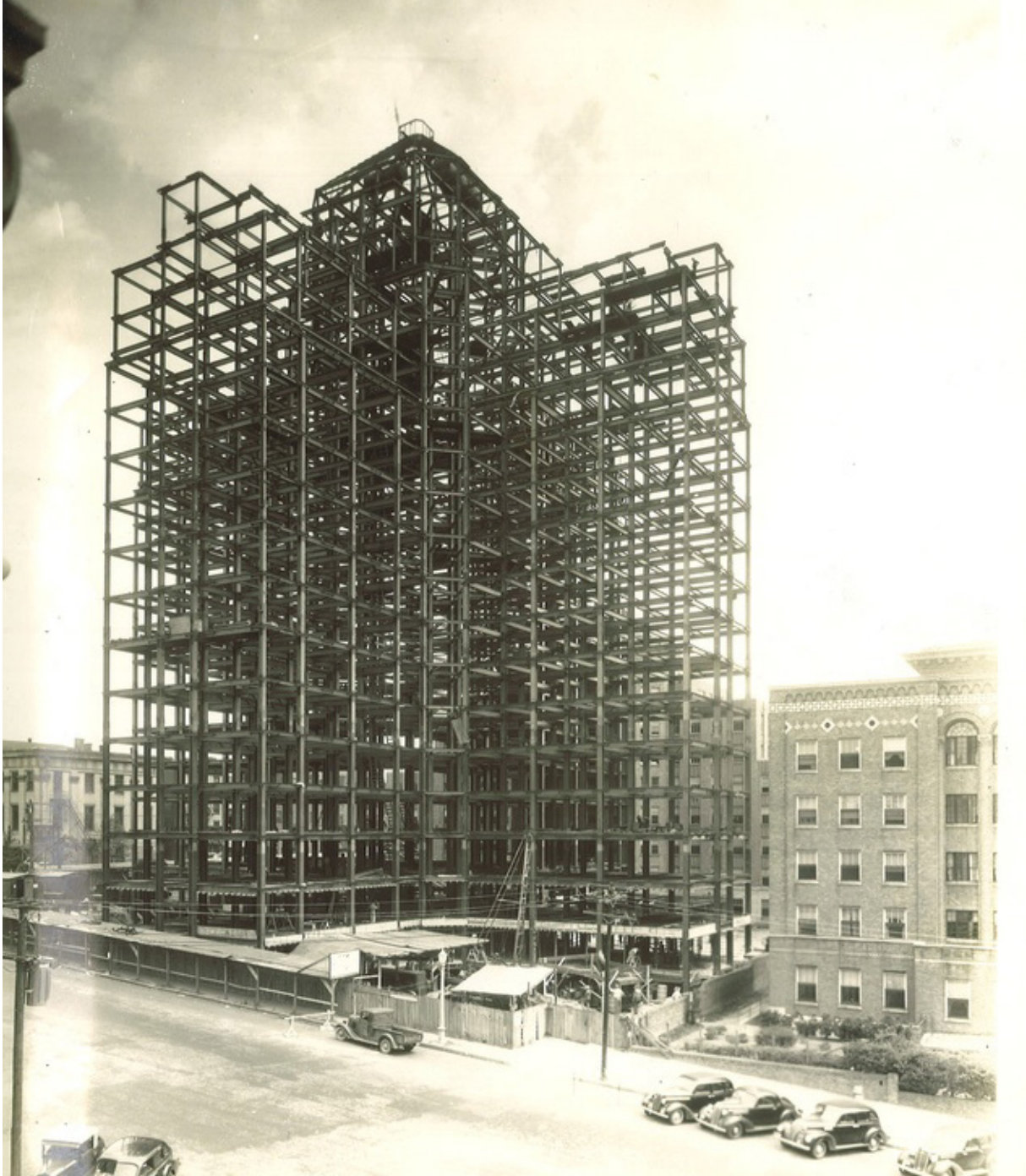
The grand state capital, in its classical revival architectural style, is situated directly across from medical campus. Down the hill, continuing along Broad Street, is Shockoe Bottom. Shockoe Bottom has recently benefited from urban renewal and now features farmers markets, various housing options and restaurants.

site

building

Address | 2001 E Broad Street
Current Use | VCU West Hospital
Year Built | 1941
Architect | Baskervill & Son
Buiding Type | IIA
Occupancy | “B” Business
Total Number of Floors| 18
Total Square Feet | 300,000 sq. ft. (gross)

steel framing during construction circa 1939



The VCU West Hospital was commissioned by the Public Works Administration in 1941 for \$2.5 million (In the Tradition of MCV, 2015). Initially the hospital housed 600 beds and served as a beacon for the MCV medical community. Cruciform in shape, the building distinguishes itself from the others surrounding and rather any building in downtown Richmond. It serves as an abutment between the MCV campus and the plunge downhill to Shockoe Bottom. The rich red brick exterior dominates, however carefully placed decorative touches add greater appeal. The Art Deco inspired bronze entrance door grills feature scenes from major milestones in medical history. Surrounding the doorways is a soft sandstone.

The building currently houses various clinical, administrative and support servies of the VCU Medical Center.



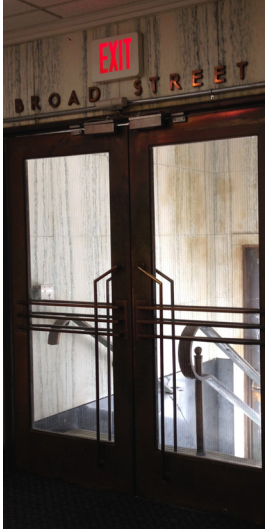
exterior view from broad street



exterior stone



exterior brick detail



broad street exit doors



bronze door detail



bronze entrance doors



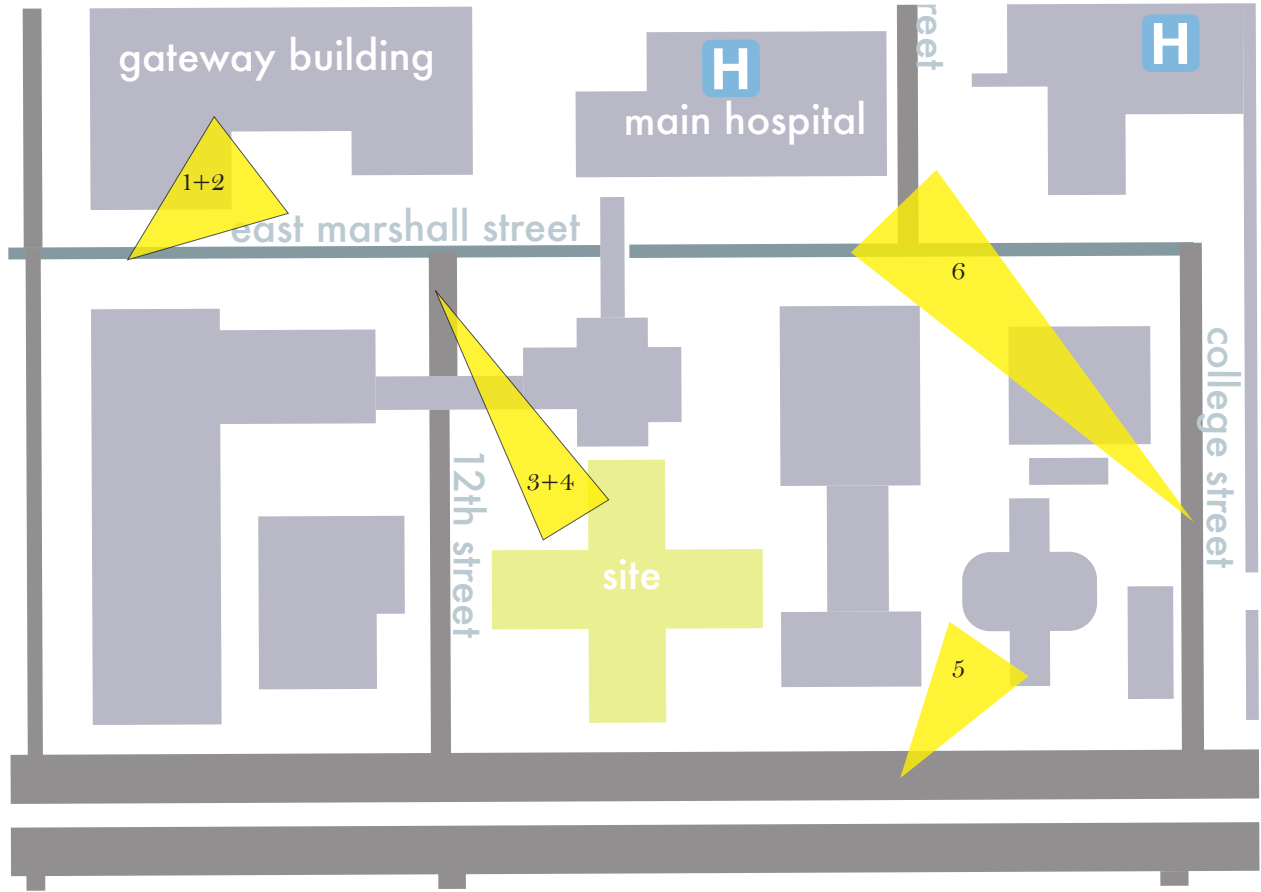
bronze grill door detail



central lobby area / elevator bank

site

views in the immediate vicinity



1 gateway building exterior



3 mcglothlin medical education center



5 monument church



2 gateway building walkway to mcglothlin medical center



4 connection between mcglothlin medical center + west hospital



6 egyptian building with main hospital behind

“it’s not the beauty of the building you should look at; it’s the construction of the
foundation that will stand the test of time.”

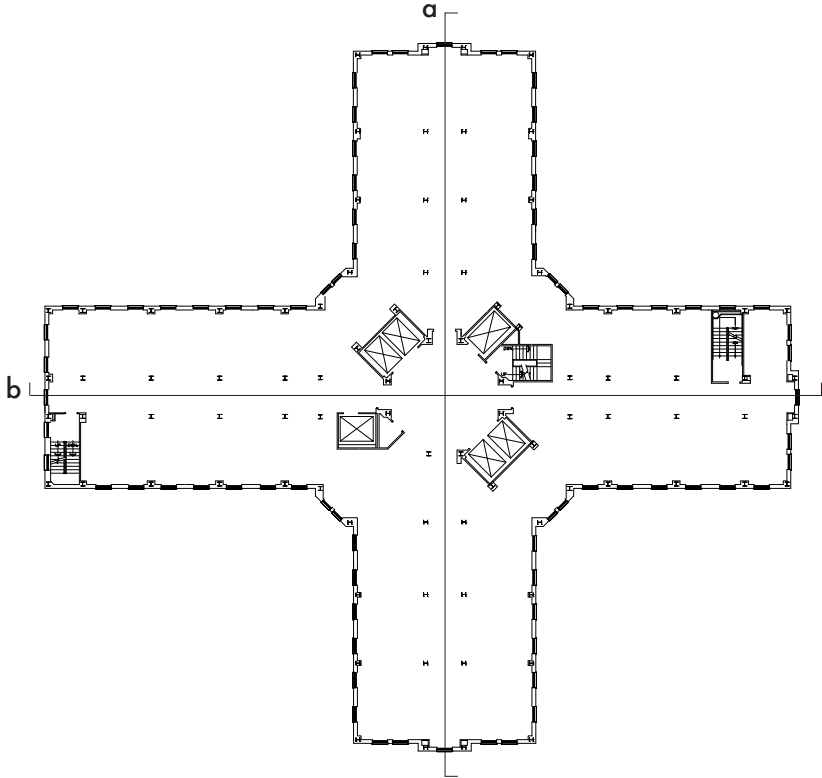
david allen coe

building analysis

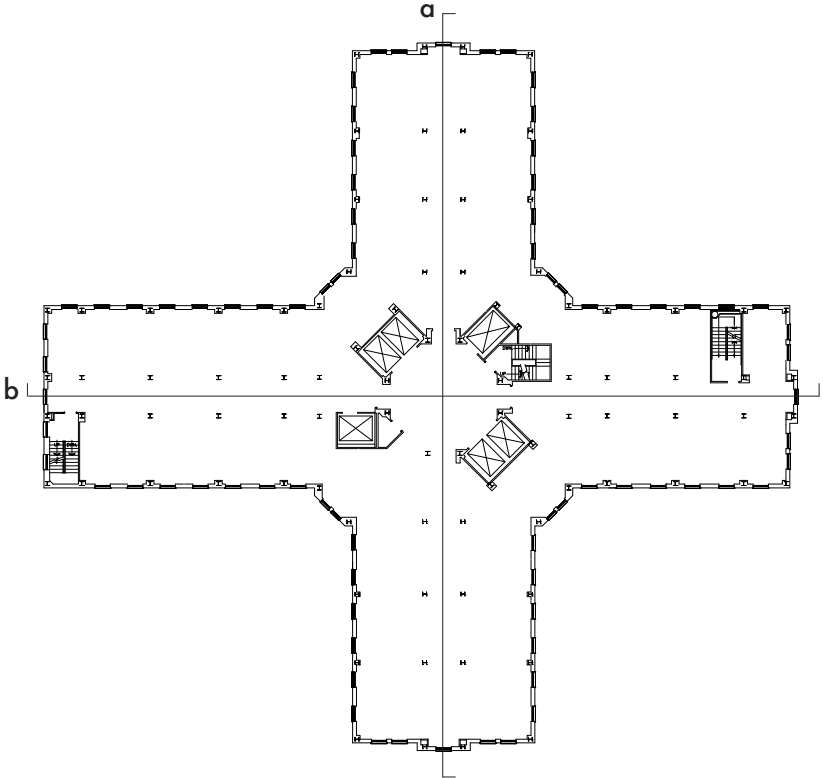
building analysis

floor plan

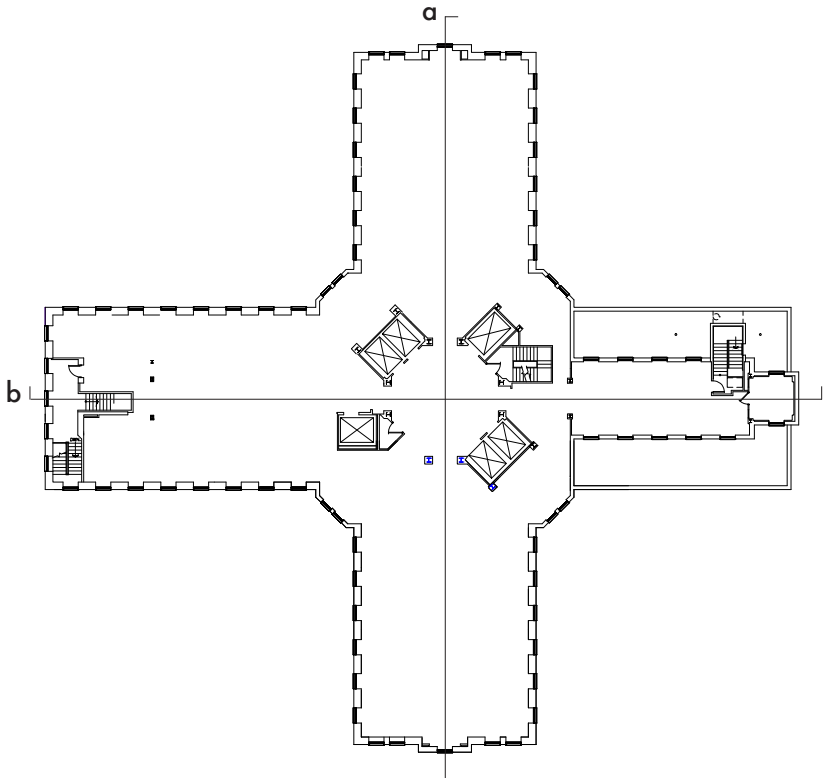
The building is comprised of 18 floors, totaling approximately 300,00 square feet (gross), however this program utilizes only floors 14 through 16, approximately 48,000 square feet (gross). With windows that run along the perimeter of the building, facing all directions, these upper floors not only offer spectacular views, but are conducive to a program that focuses on natural light.



14th floor plan



15th floor plan

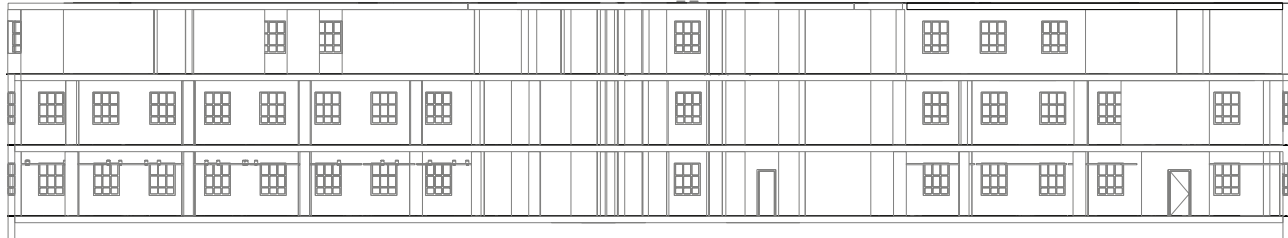


16th floor plan



building analysis

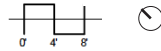
section



a | north / south section

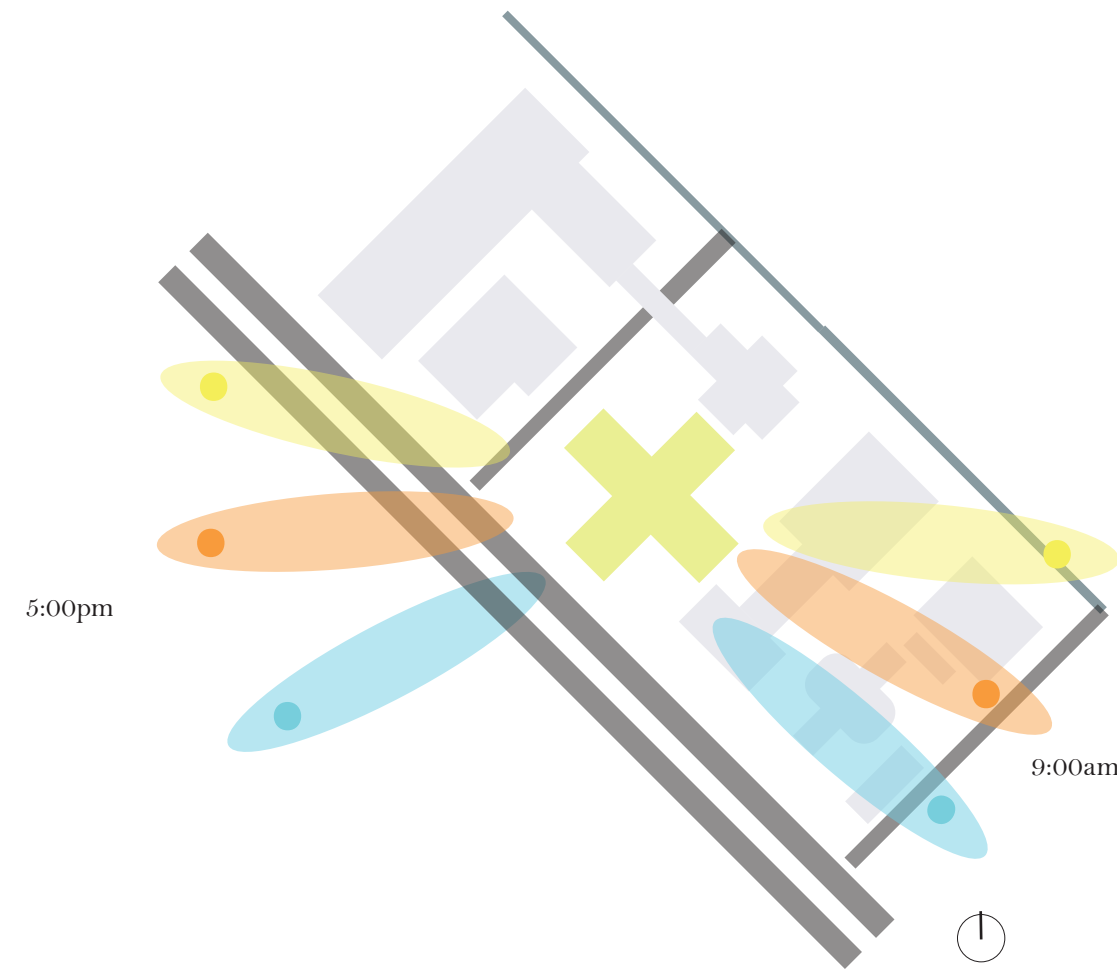


b | east / west section



building analysis

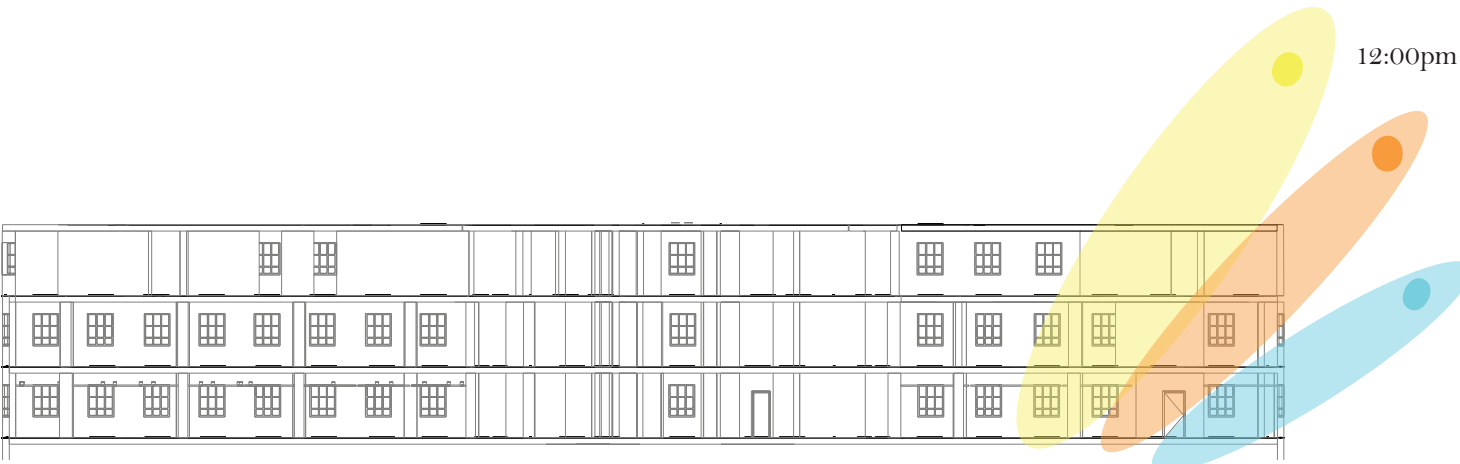
sun study



- summer solstice
- spring solstice
- winter solstice



east / west section



north / south section

“the beginning is the most important part of the work.”

plato

program

program

space	description		ff+e	users	sq ft. per person (net)	max occupant load	total area (sq. ft)	occupancy type
main lobby	serves as guest check-in, impromptu social gatherings, wi-fi access throughout		reception desk, sofas, lounge chairs	parents, siblings, patient, instructors, clinical staff	20	50	1000	A3
(6) standard guest room w/ private bath	king bedroom, amenities with relaxation in mind		bed (king), desk, chair, tv, credenza, drawers	parents, siblings, patient	300 (total)	4	1800	R2
(12) suite w/ private bath	two bedroom suite with seperate living space and kitchenette		king bed, bunk bed, desk, chair, tv, credenza, drawers, sofa, lounge chairs, kitchenette (sink, full size refridgerator, stove, dishwasher)	parents, siblings, patient	650 (total)	6	7800	R2
(2) community kitchen	prepare meals with other families, social spot		(2) stoves, (2) refridgerators, dual sink, cabinets, island unit, bar stools, dining table, dining chairs, lounge furniture	parents, siblings, patient	15	20 (per floor)	1800	A2
eating + gathering hall	dining hall with flexible seating, social hub, connection zone		dining tables (various sizes), dining chairs, sofas, lounge chairs, coffee tables	parents, siblings, patient, instructors, clinical staff	25	60	1800	A2
kitchen	food preperation		sink, counters, storage, ovens	general staff (kitchen)	13 (sq. ft. per seat)	10	700	A2
exercise	work out space		treadmills, ellipticals, weights, stationary bikes	parents, siblings, instructors	30	20	760	A3
yoga	space for mind, body, and soul connection		storage units	parents, instructors	30	20	900	B
reflection space	space for reflection and contemplation		bench seating	parents, siblings, patients, instructors, general staff, clinical staff	30	60	1500	A3
arts + crafts	space for expression and creativity		craft tables (mix of high and low), chairs, storage, sink	parents, siblings, instructors	15	28	600	A3
(4) clinical advising (individual)	private one-on-one room		table, chairs, lounge chair(s)	parents, siblings, clinical staff	50	3	600	B
(1) group counseling	education and peer support		chairs, long table	parents, siblings, clinical staff	20	15	300	B
staff office	private space for staff to unwind		table, chairs, kitchenette (sink, full size refrigerator, dishwasher)	instructors, general staff, clinical staff	10	30	350	B

program

user profile

- parent(s) of patient

whether as a couple, single parent or a parent traveling without spouse
- sibling(s) of patient

range in age but most likely under 18
- patient

child receiving treatment through the VCU medical system (occasional visit)

- general staff

front desk, housekeeping, culinary, etc.
- instructors

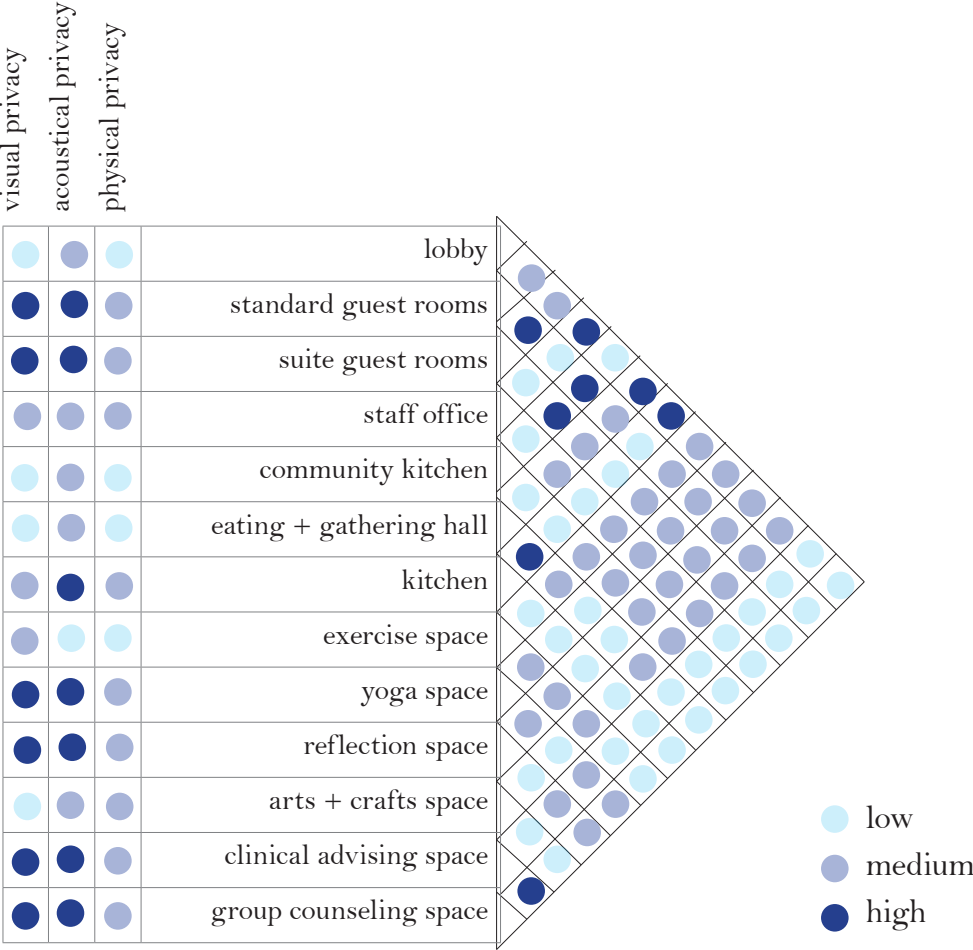
yoga, general exercise, mindfulness, etc.
- specialized medical staff

psychologist, dietitian, etc.

adjacency matrix

Important adjacencies are considered in order to make space plan decisions. These adjacencies analyze how to use proximity to create emphasis, as well as consider visual, acoustical and physical privacy.

This matrix shows the importance of privacy in the advising/support areas, as well as guest rooms and other quieter spaces such as yoga and the reflection space. Important adjacencies such as the proximity of the guest rooms to community spaces is shown.



“whatever great things we build, end up building us.”

jim rohn

precedents

precedents

maggie's centre west london



architect: rogers stirk harbour + partners
location: london, england
year built: 2008

“Architecture and art do not themselves save cancer patients, but they can amplify and ethos of an institution in a positive direction” (Domus, 2015). These are the wise words of Charles Jencks. His wife, Maggie Keswick Jencks, died of breast cancer in 1995. Before she died, Maggie and Charles founded Maggie's Centre; an information and support center for those living with cancer and their care-givers. Located in various cities throughout the UK, Maggie's Centres are a place to meet experts, consult the internet and libraries or attend group therapy.

Maggie's Centres are typically located adjacent to a hospital and within an urban context. The West London Maggie's Centre is directly adjacent to the Charing Cross Hospital, for example. The centre's interior and exterior counter-balance the cold, austere architecture of the nearby hospital by using the concept of a welcoming home to drive the design.

facade of building looking into dining area

The exterior of the West London centre is painted a bright brick red. The kitchen is the heart of the building with a long table for cancer patients and loved ones to share their experiences. The roof is a metal slab perforated by wide skylights which allow natural light to penetrate into the heart of the building, its inner paths and communal spaces (Domus, 2015). Sunlight is a welcome relief to the harsh fluorescent lighting of the hospital. There is a strong indoor/outdoor connection via various courtyards throughout the space.

This precedent illustrates the importance that design, specifically as it relates to natural light, has on physical, emotional and mental well being of those under stressful circumstances. Connection to those around you, as well as to place, is established through the design.



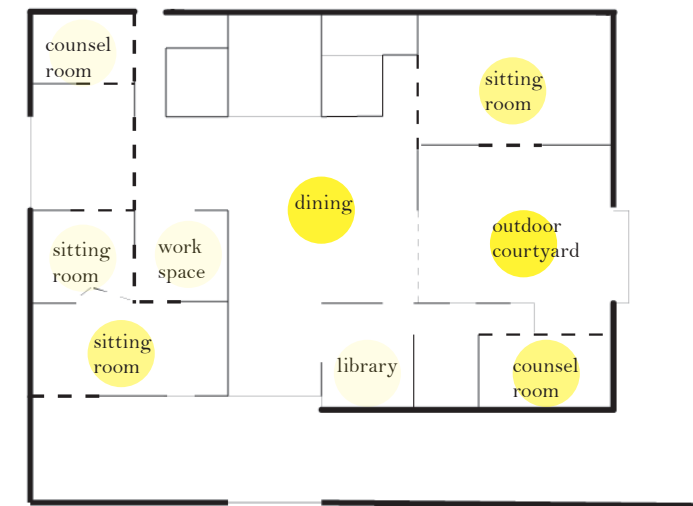
exterior view



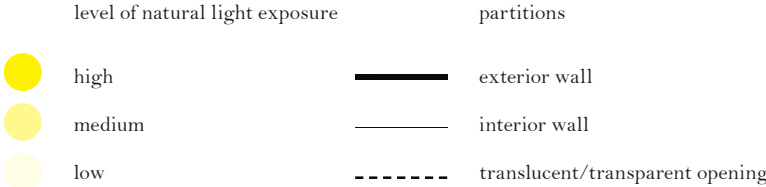
dining area

precedents

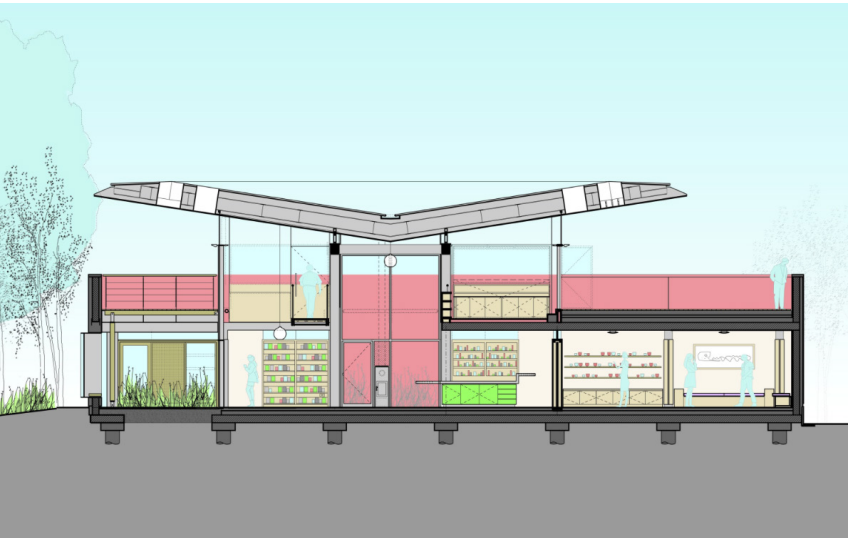
maggie's centre west london



deconstructed plan



roof plan



longitudinal section



sitting room



dining area



sliding doors offer flexible space



outdoor space

precedents

ronald mcdonald house of richmond



architect: unknown
location: richmond, va
year established: 1980

The Ronald McDonald House serves as a place to stay for families with hospitalized children who are receiving treatment. Guests are encouraged to make a nominal nightly donation, however no family is ever turned away for inability to pay. Currently there are 322 Ronald McDonald's Houses in 57 countries and regions (Ronald McDonald House Charities, 2015).

Situated on historic Monument Avenue, in the heart of Richmond, is the city's Ronald McDonald House. The basement level features a play space/den, staff office, and laundry room. Reception, living space and an expansive kitchen are on the main level. 9 bedrooms with shared bathrooms occupy the 2nd level. The 3rd level features a small common area. The average stay is 14 days, with some staying as short as one night, others 6 to 8 weeks, and some as long as one year. Families must be referred by the hospital in order to stay at the home.

exterior of house

As Executive Director of RMC Richmond, Kerry Blumberg, adds "the hospitals are our care partners..working together to provide the best possible care for the patient and their family" (personal interview). The highly rated MCV/VCU medical system not only means many east coast region families to the Richmond House, but also international families.

The House offers various programs to bring families together such as birthday celebrations, pet therapy, movie night, board games, and arts and crafts. There are no televisions in the individual guest rooms. Connection is an important component of the House program.

The House plays an important role in establishing the program of Nest. Understanding of the profile and needs of those families who stay in the Richmond Ronald McDonald House is paramount.



guestroom



kitchen/dining

precedents

ronald mcdonald house of british columbia



architect: michael green architecture
location: vancouver, british columbia
year built: 2014

Similar in program to the Ronald McDonald House of Richmond, the Ronald McDonald House of British Columbia boasts a bit more additions not only in rooms, but in amenities as well. Able to accomodate up to 73 families, the house is one of the top 10 Ronald McDonald Houses in the world in terms of size. “It’s on the world stage for the uniqueness of its construction, the uniqueness of its function and the amenities to families” said Richard Pass, Ronald McDonald House chief executive officer (Zacharias, 2015).

While the previous house was not near the hospital, the new home is located on the grounds of the British Columbia Children’s Hospital. Families were interviewed during the intial process of finding an alternate location and the top priority was proximity to the hospital. This provides an easier opportunity for families to rest when able.

facade of building looking into living space

The house is divided into four pavillions (Forest, Beach, Mountain and River) with adjoining common spaces. Each pavillion has a shared professionally equipped kitchen for individual families to make meals. There are also two dining rooms to encourage families to interact with one another.

The healing power of play is stressed in various areas of the house; one being a slide from the second to first floor. An arts and crafts room is featured as well. An indoor fitness center reminds parents of the importance to be active, especially during stressful times. Secure wi-fi zones and computer stations are stiationed throughout the house.

The Ronald McDonald House of British Columbia serves as an important precedent as it relates to the program of Nest. Amenities such as shared kitchens on guest room floors, arts and crafts space, indoor fitness center and wi-fi zones will all be important features in Nest.



living area



dining

precedents

ronald mcdonald house of british columbia



model illustrating four housing pavillions with courtyard connection



courtyard



exterior



courtyard connected to dining space



courtyard fireplace



play zone



community kitchen

“the process i go through in the art, and the architecture, i actually want it to be almost
childlike. sometimes i think it’s magical.”

maya lin

exploration

exploration

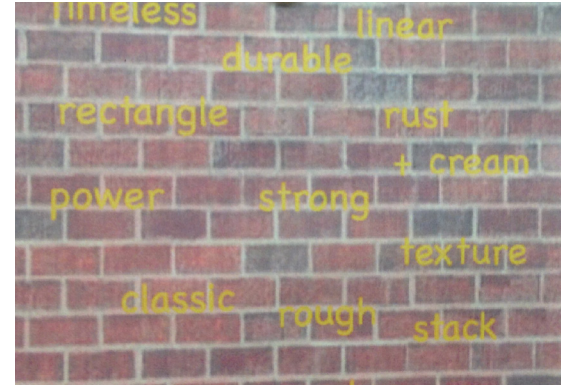
initial concept studies



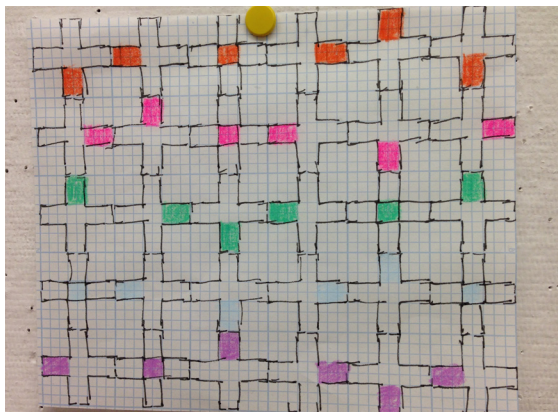
envelop



connection



strength



repetition



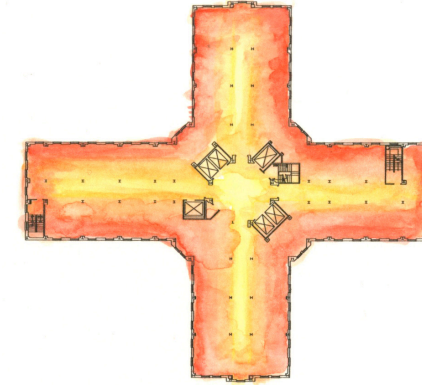
embrace



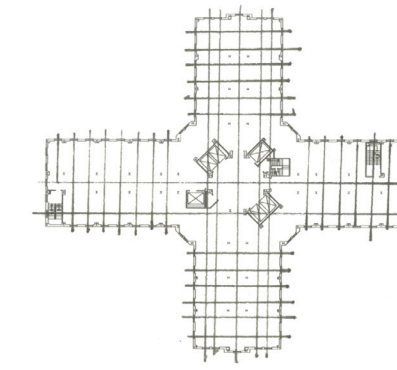
flow

exploration

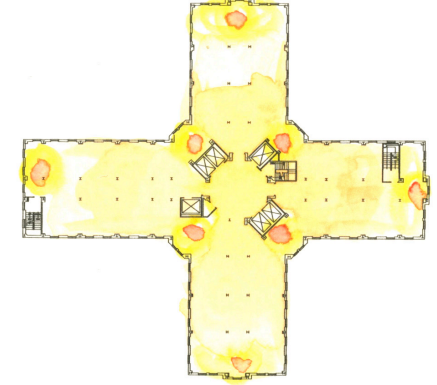
watercolor / ink and vellum studies



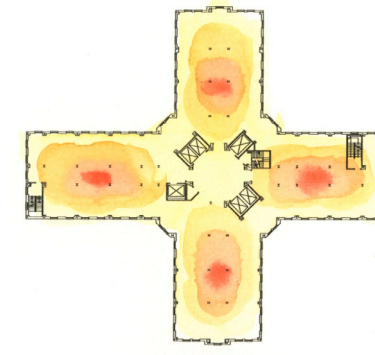
consistent high energy on perimeter
less energy radiating inwards



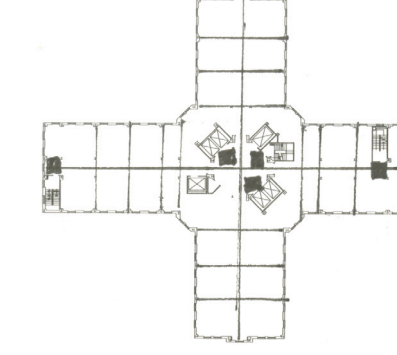
fenestration parti



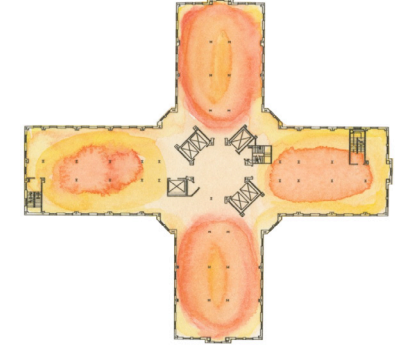
high energy points in "end" zones
and in center "corners"



(4) equal zones with high energy ring in center
less energy radiating outwards



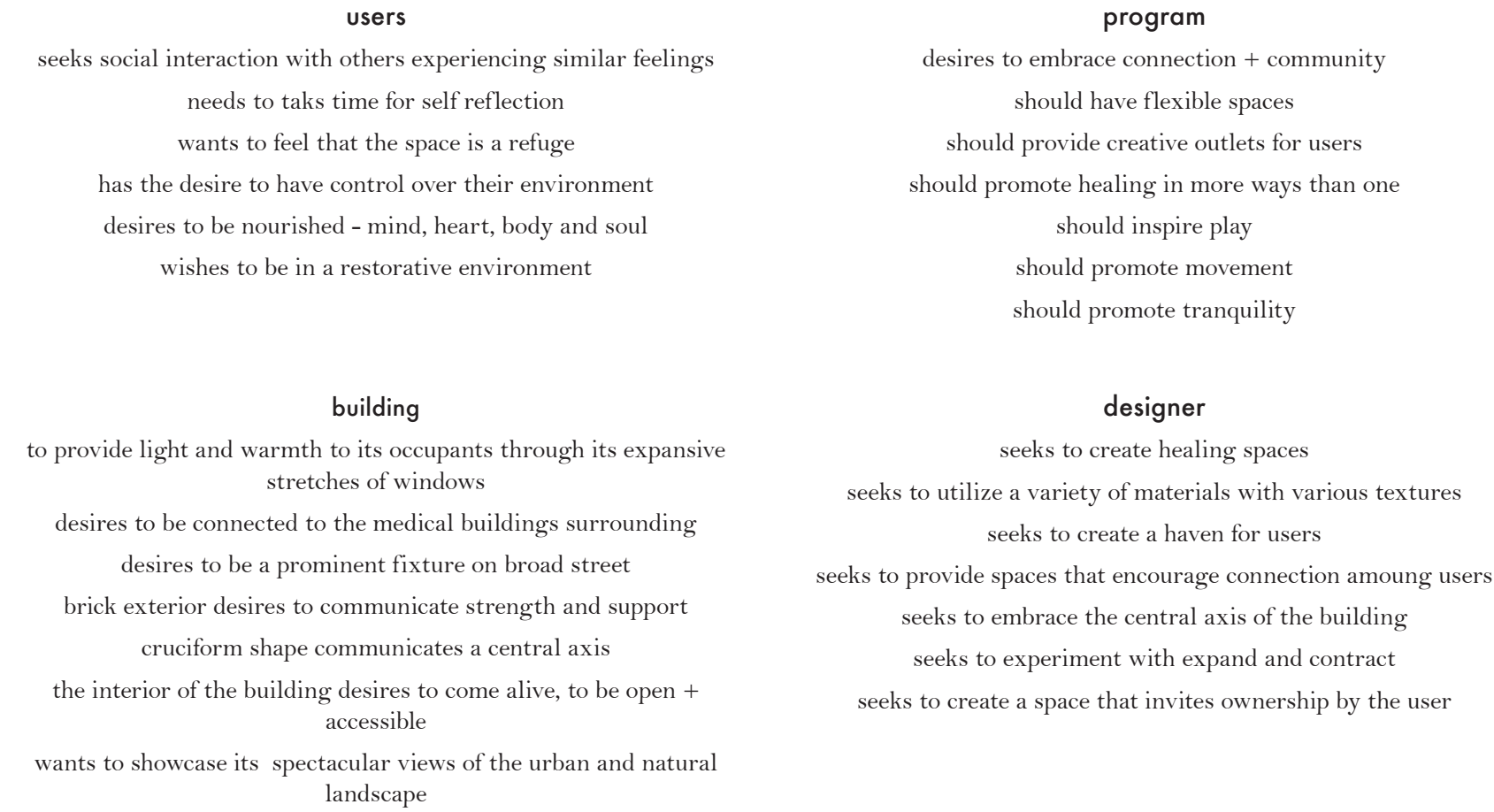
column + central axis parti



high energy ring in center of east + west zone
high energy ring along exterior of north + south zone

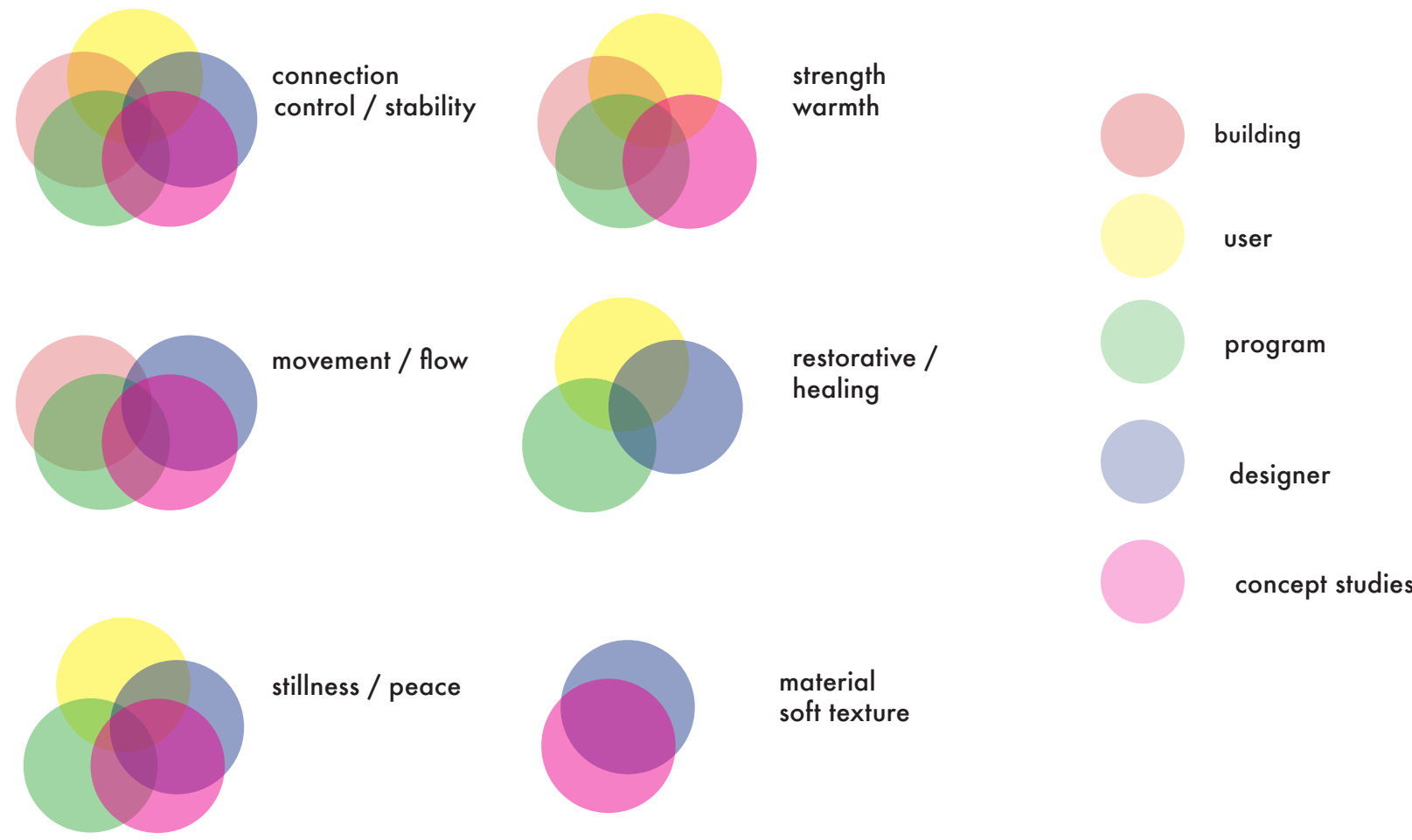
exploration

wants, needs + desires



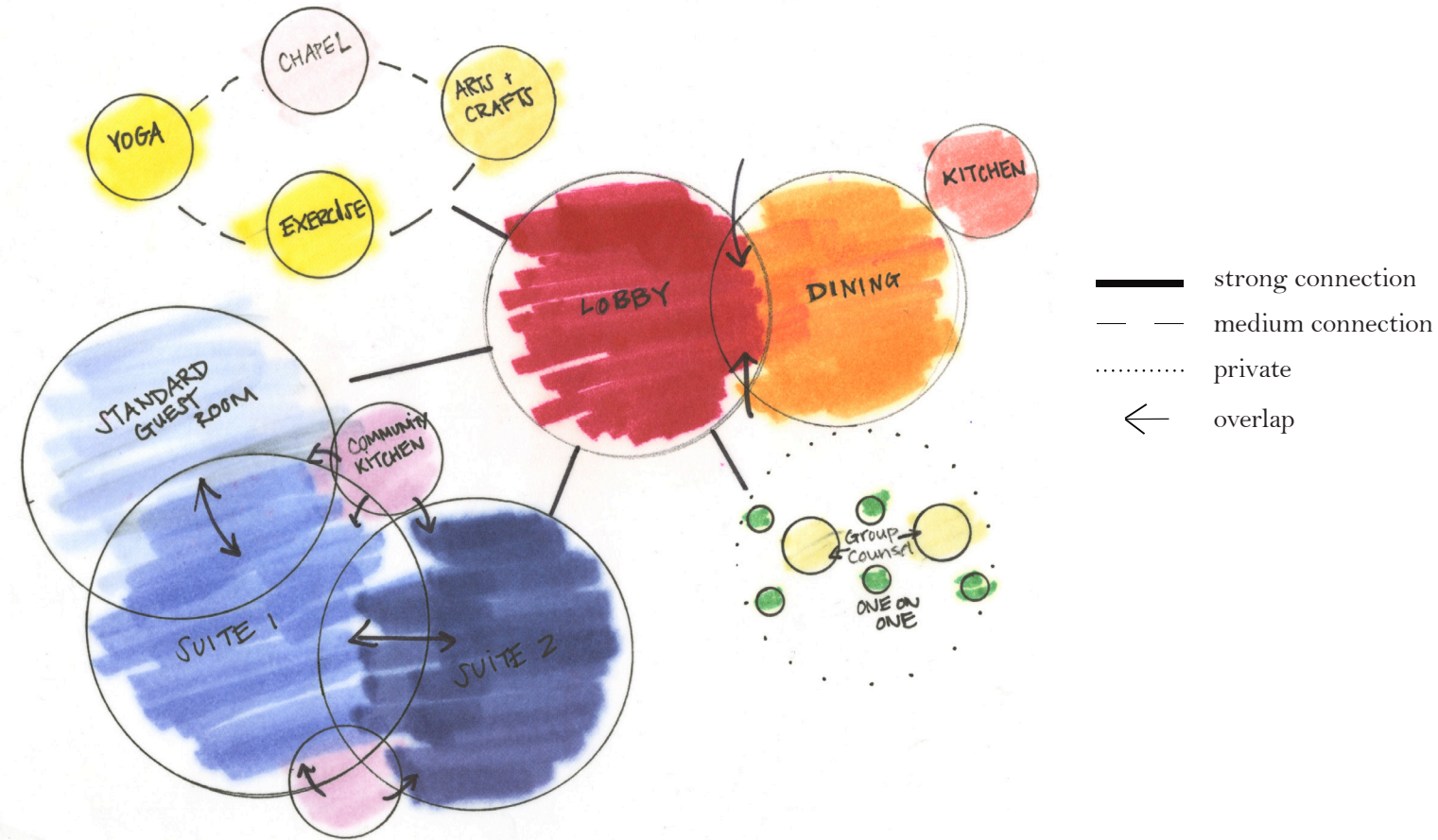
exploration

overlaps



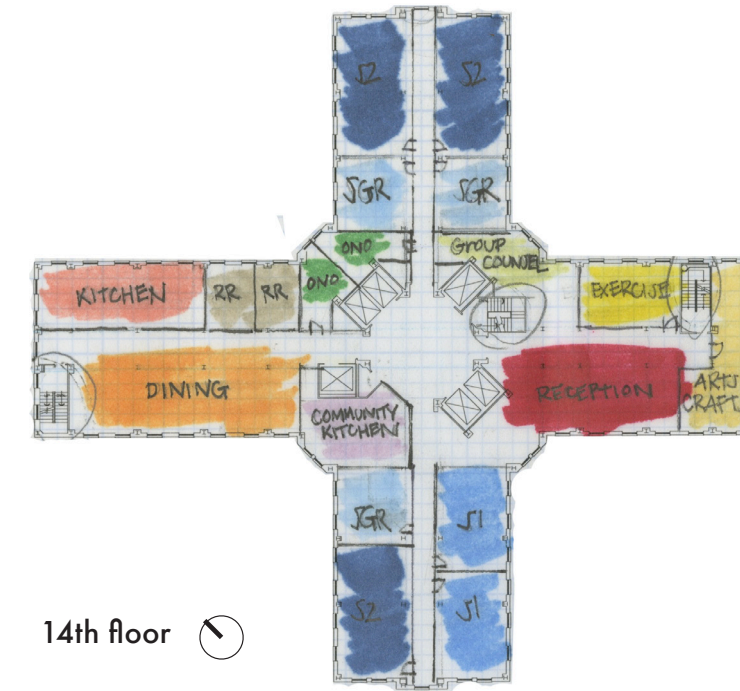
exploration

bubble diagram



exploration

preliminary block planning



Initially the program was intended to occupy only 2 floors - 14 and 16. Certain spaces were intended to be double height - the guest rooms, dining space, and main lobby (reception). While the dining space ultimately remained two story, the guests rooms and main lobby needed to provide a more intimate feel, thus both spaces became one story.

All guest rooms then were then able to occupy only the north and south wing of the 3 floors - 14, 15, 16 - with community kitchens at the end of each hallway. This also permitted the reflection space (chapel) to become a two story light-filled space on the 15th and 16th floor.



The kitchen and restrooms moved to the center of the west wing with seating circling around. This allowed for as much light as possible to fill one of the main connection spaces. The glass-walled exercise room was stacked on top of the kitchen to allow connection to those below. Above the exercise room moved yoga and all counseling rooms, creating an entire wellness wing.

“architecture is the learned game, correct and magnificent, of
forms assembled in the light.”

le corbusier

discovery

discovery

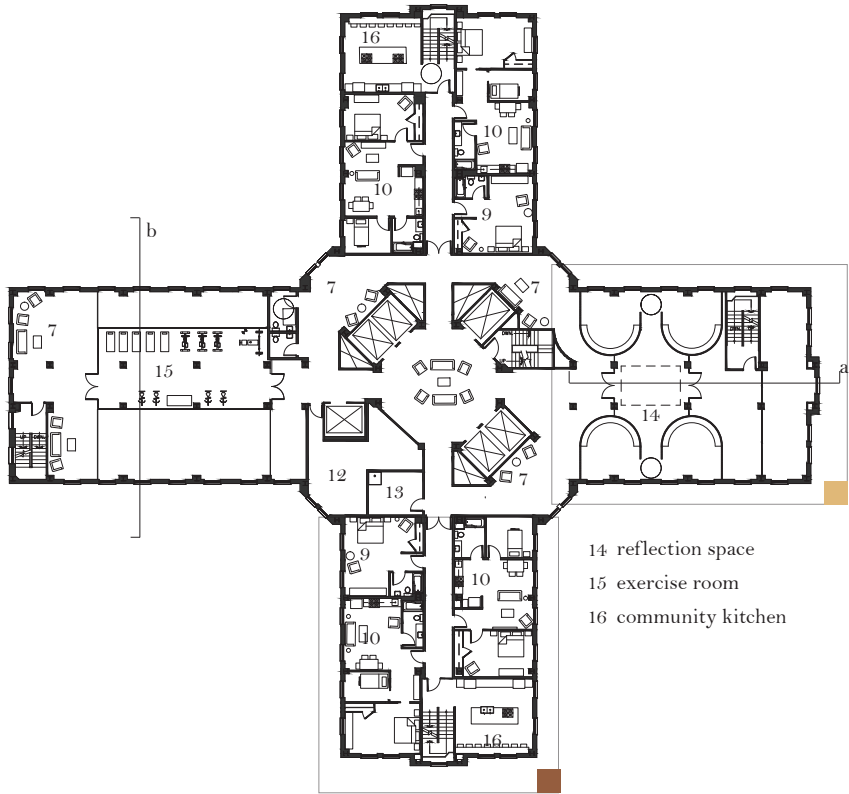
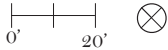
final floor plans

concept

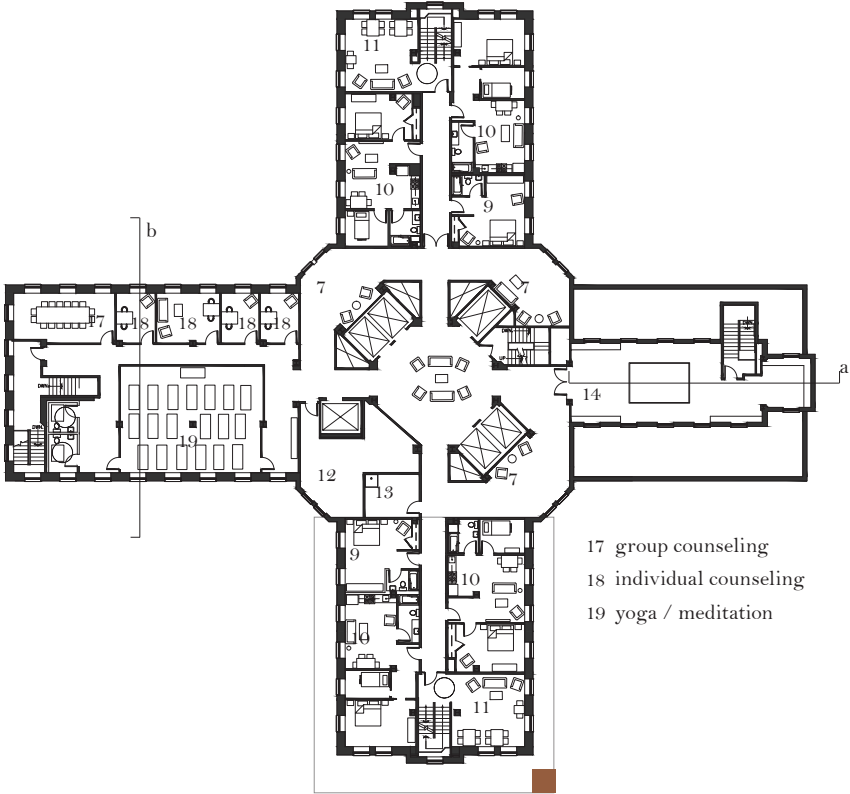
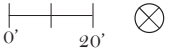
this project celebrates the stength of the collective. how one comes together to form many. it explores how the individual and the whole are seperate and yet how they play together. the space reflects a consideration for the flexibility and control that is needed by the individual components of the project - the users, the building, the site, the program - and how ultimately by providing a balance between both flexibility and control, ideal support of the collective is achieved. this is done through a consideration for repetition, scale and exposure.



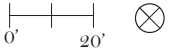
14th floor plan



15th floor plan

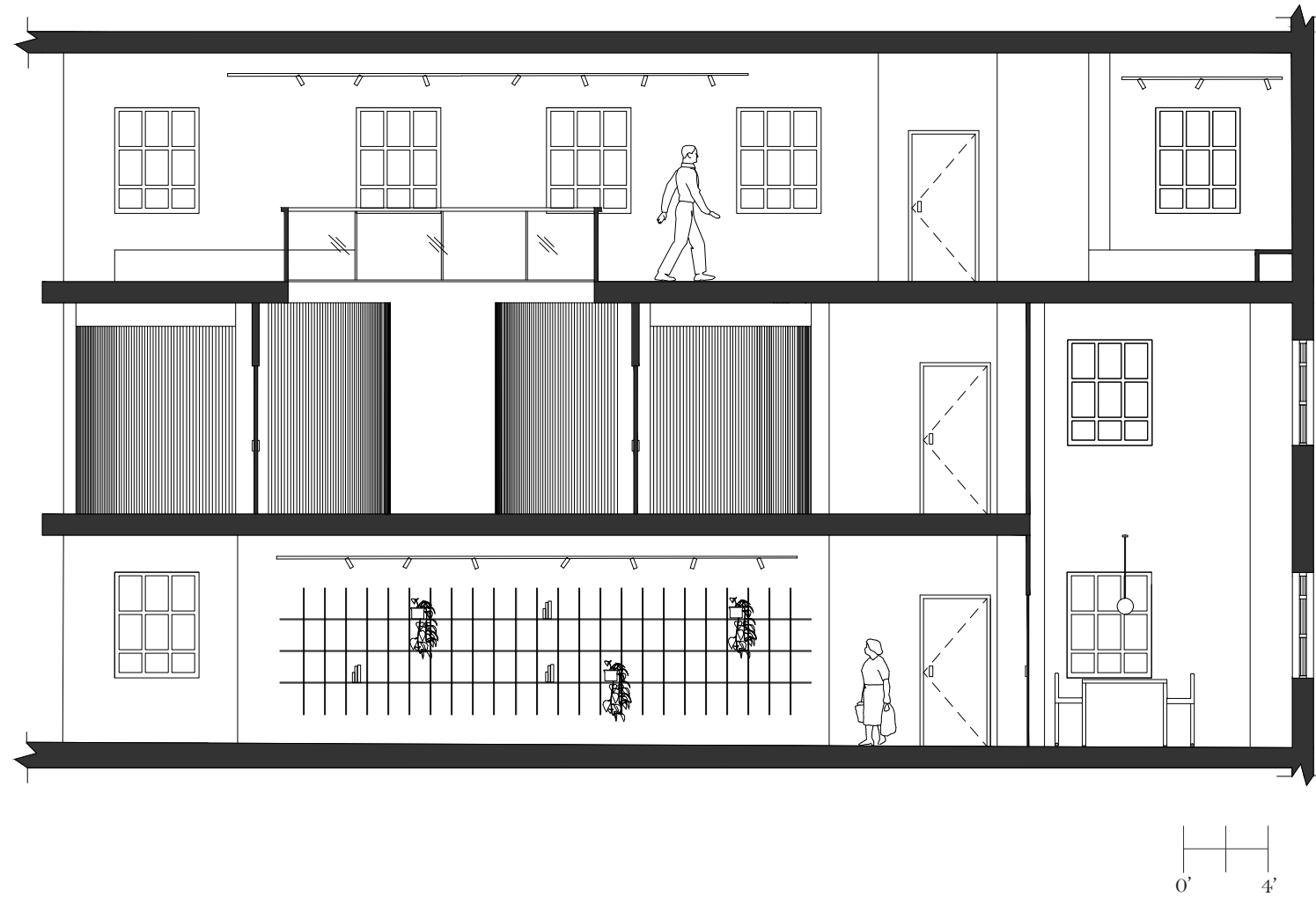


16th floor plan

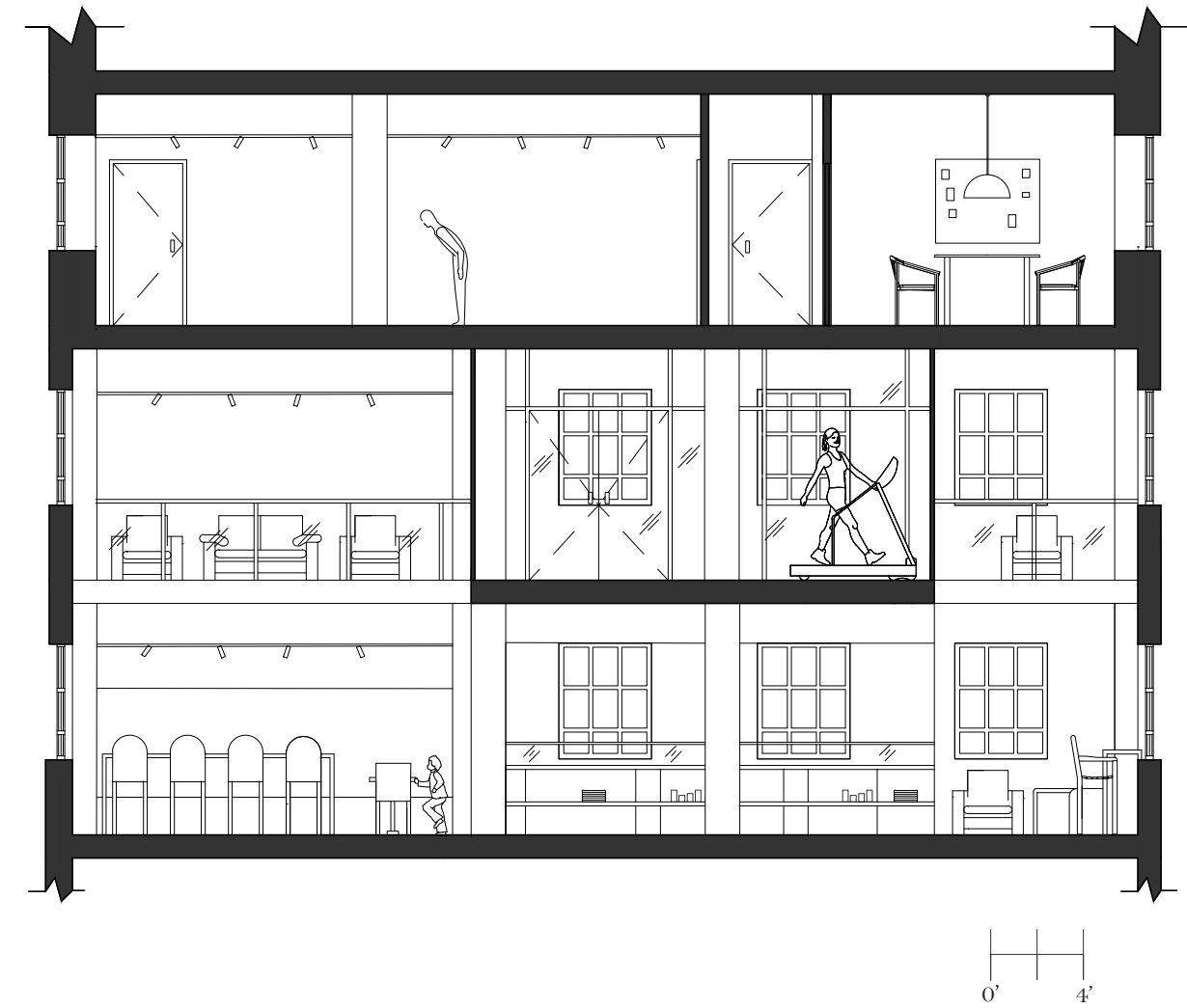


discovery

section a



section b



discovery
main lobby



The main lobby serves as guest check-in, as well as a gathering spot before departing for the day, or heading out in the evening with fellow Nest families. Guests are greeted with warm wood accents, comfortable furniture showcasing bold colors and patterns. A large shelving wall houses plants and books, as well as small momentos that individuals leave behind as an offer of support of others. It serves as a place of connection and collection.

ff+e selections



custom walnut
front desk



mark product
bosco sofa



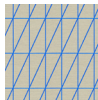
mark product
bosco chair



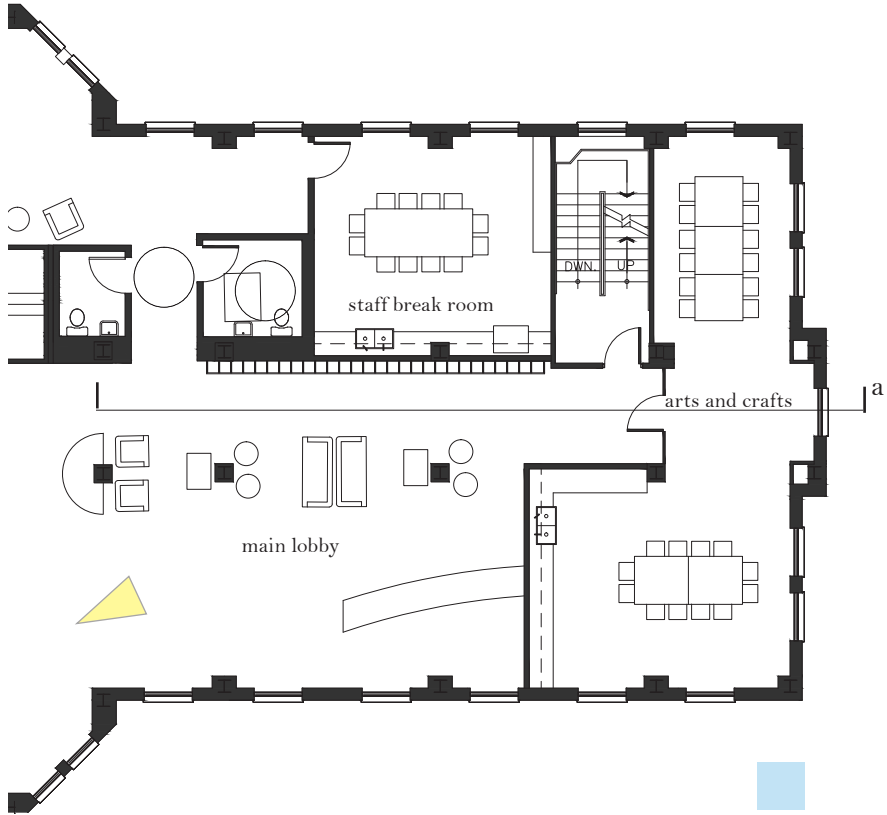
edge lighting
vega round suspension



manuel canovas
champs-elysees | emeraude



maharam
bright angle | cyan



enlarged plan

discovery

eating and gathering hall



Perched on the 14th floor of the building, the Eating and Gathering Hall serves as a place for enjoying a family meal or a quick snack with that friend made during yoga. It is a social zone that encourages connection with other families through community tables, as well as lounge style seating on both the first and second story. With windows running two stories along the perimeter of the space, both the urban and natural views of the surrounding area can be enjoyed at almost any point. Additionally, the flood of natural light offers a welcome relief from the stark fluorescent lighting of the nearby hospital. Guests are encouraged to place photos of their loved one residing in the hospital on the entrance wall.

ff+e selections



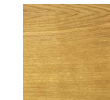
artek
alvar alto | chair 611



artek
alvar alto | chair 65



artek
alvar alto | high chair K65



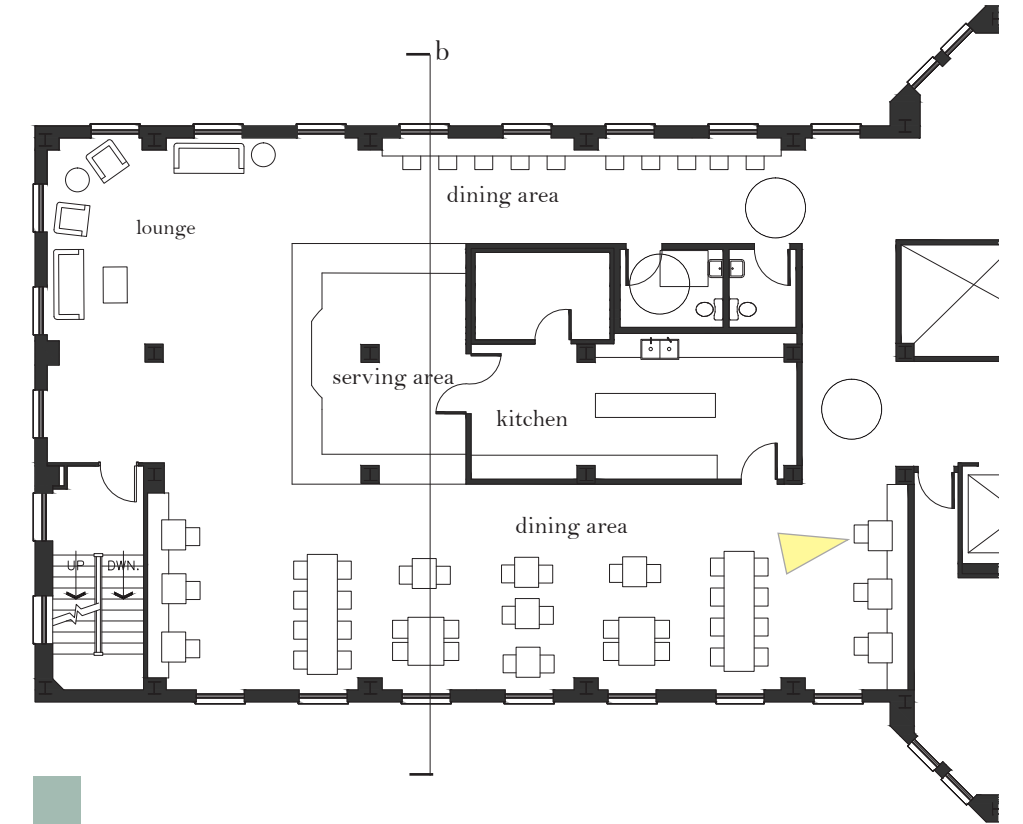
custom oak
dining tables



maharam
alloy | lapis



louis poulsen
lc shutters lamp



enlarged plan

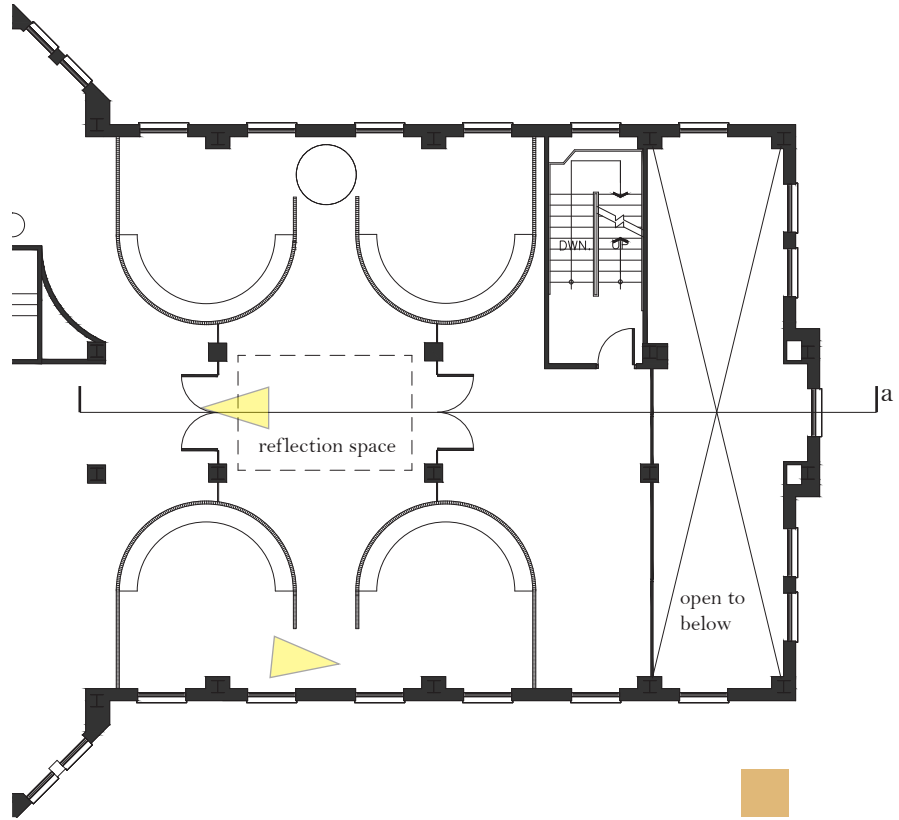
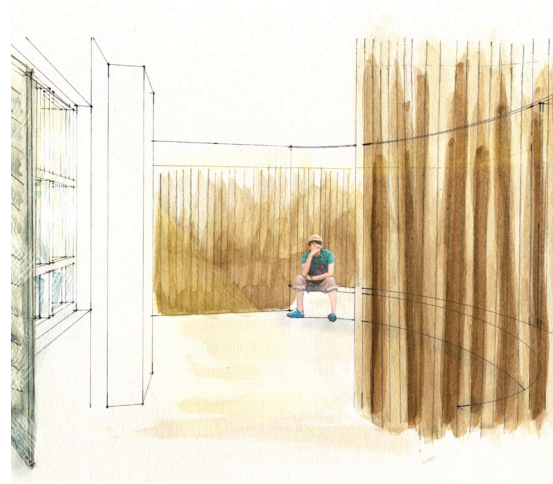
discovery

reflection space



The Reflection Space is that of quiet contemplation. It is a place to offer a prayer, or a hope, for your loved one in the hospital. It is a place to be still. It is a place to be alone with your thoughts and feelings.

The guest is initially greeted by rich walnut wood slats on the exterior of both the east and west side. Soft cove lighting above the wood slats guides the guest towards the main entrance doors. Approaching the glass doors you are able to discern wood slats on the interior that are slightly spaced to absorb light from the two story atrium, as well as provide light to the atrium from the perimeter windows. Once inside, you discover the custom red and blue glass lighting feature situated between floors. Guests are then able to decide which of the four circular “pods” to sit and reflect in. They may be alone or with company.



ff+e selections



walnut wood slats



marble systems
seashell honed limestone



steel cable for custom
lighting fixture



red and blue glass balls for
custom lighting fixture

enlarged plan

discovery

community kitchen



Community Kitchens are located on the 15th floor of both the north and south side of the building. The Community Kitchen is a space for individuals and families to prepare meals together. It is a space to share stories, along with recipes. A community lounge on both the 14th and 16th floors, connects to the Community Kitchens via a central stairwell. The lounge space offers comfortable seating and dining tables.

ff+e selections



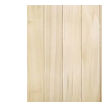
mark product
molly barstool



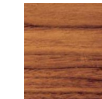
louis poulsen
tolbod pendant



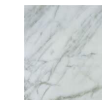
edge lighting
vega round suspension



poplar flooring



custom walnut island



topcu
grey marble



discovery

standard guest room



The Standard Guest Rooms features warm wood accents in the form of a solid oak wood bed, and dresser. Pops of color come into play on the blue stripe ccent wall, as well as the classic red Saarinen Womb Chair. Shadow boxes offer an opportunity for guests to place family photos or drawings made in Nests' Arts and Crafts space.

ff+e selections



custom oak platform bed



sorrentino marriani
mccormick | dresser desk
combo



knoll
eero saarinen womb chair



mdc
strippy zippy | vibrant



poplar flooring



y lighting
adjustable swing arm wall
sconce



discovery

suite




The Suites offer a bit more space for larger families or those staying for an extended period of time. In addition to the king bedroom, a bunk room offers playful sleeping quarters for children. The Suite features a kitchenette with full size refrigerator, stove, as well as disher and sink. Shadow boxes adorn the living room walls.


ff+e selections


 blu dot
mono sleeper sofa

 artek
armchair 531

 mark product
shaper coffee table

 maharam
pin | flamingo

 louis poulsen
lp circle surface

 louis poulsen
tolbod pendant

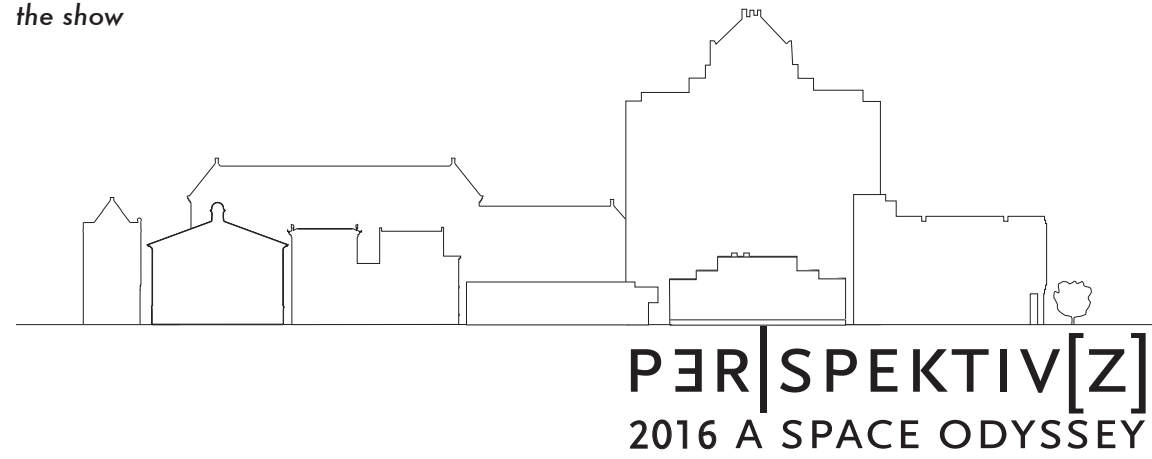


“every worthwhile accomplishment, big or little, has it’s stages of drudgery and triumph;
a beginning, a struggle, and a victory.”

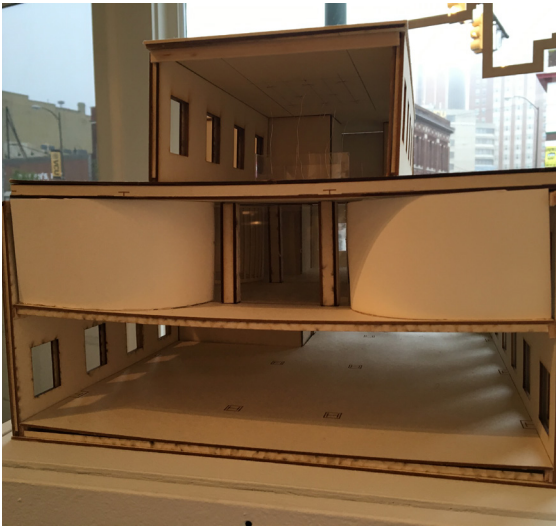
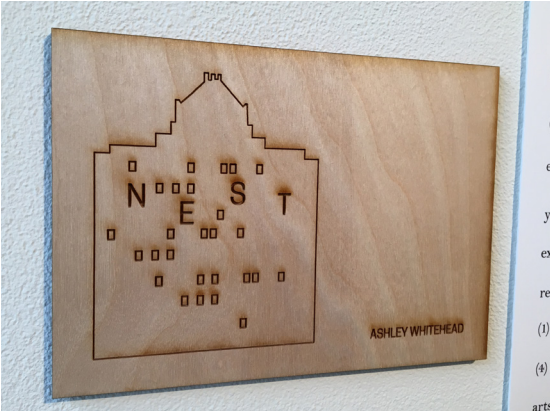
mahatma gandhi

realization

realization
the show



realization
the show



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images

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